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ABSTRACT

This guide was designed with three purposes in mind: (1) to build a greater awareness among trustees of library organization in the state and of the support and services available to them through that organization; (2) to stimulate greater interest in and knowledge of the many duties and responsibilities of library trustees; and (3) to encourage closer cooperation with the public library system of which they are members. The following topics are covered: libraries in New York state, selection of trustees, trustees' responsibilities, library board organization, library policies, public relations, library laws, budgets and finance, trustees' relations with librarian and staff, planning and evaluation, library construction, and continuing education. Appendices include a checklist for trustees; a glossary of selected terms, acronyms, and abbreviations; a diagram of library development; and the Library Bill of Rights. (FM)

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New York State Library Trustees' Handbook

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The New York State Association of Library Boards (NYSALB) has long been interested in developing a handbook for library trustees. Their interest and the interest of Joseph F. Shubert, Assistant Commissioner for Libraries and State Librarian in the State Education Department, coupled with funding under the Library Services and Construction Act, Title I, have made this handbook possible. Ronald C. Dixon, a trustee of NYSALB, wrote the basic text and acted as general editor. The final text, however, included suggestions and criticisms from a large number of trustees and librarians from all sections of the State. Particularly noted should be the contributions of Mrs. Oscar Bargnes, Richard Barry, Dr. Allan Boudreau, Daniel Casey, Charles Custer, Leon Dapson, Alfred Freund, Richard Halsey, Barbara Healy, Irving Kessler, Ronald Lagasse, Shirley Lang, Dr. Esther Lopato, Anthony Messineo, Dr. Arthur Newkirk, Dadie Perlov, Keela Rogers, Jack Spear, Theodore Wenzl, and Marjorie Woods.

New York State Library Trustees' Handbook

INTRODUCTION

Behind the printing and distribution of this Handbook to all library trustees in New York State there has been a three-fold purpose. The first goal has been to build a greater awareness among trustees everywhere of library organization in the state and of the support and services available to them through that organization. Second has been an attempt to stimulate greater interest in and knowledge of the many duties and responsibilities of trustees. The third purpose has been to encourage closer cooperation with the public library system of which they are members in order that they may gain all the benefits that are available to them through the systems' organization. Of course underlying all these goals is the improvement in library services, and the enhancement of the image of libraries in their communities.

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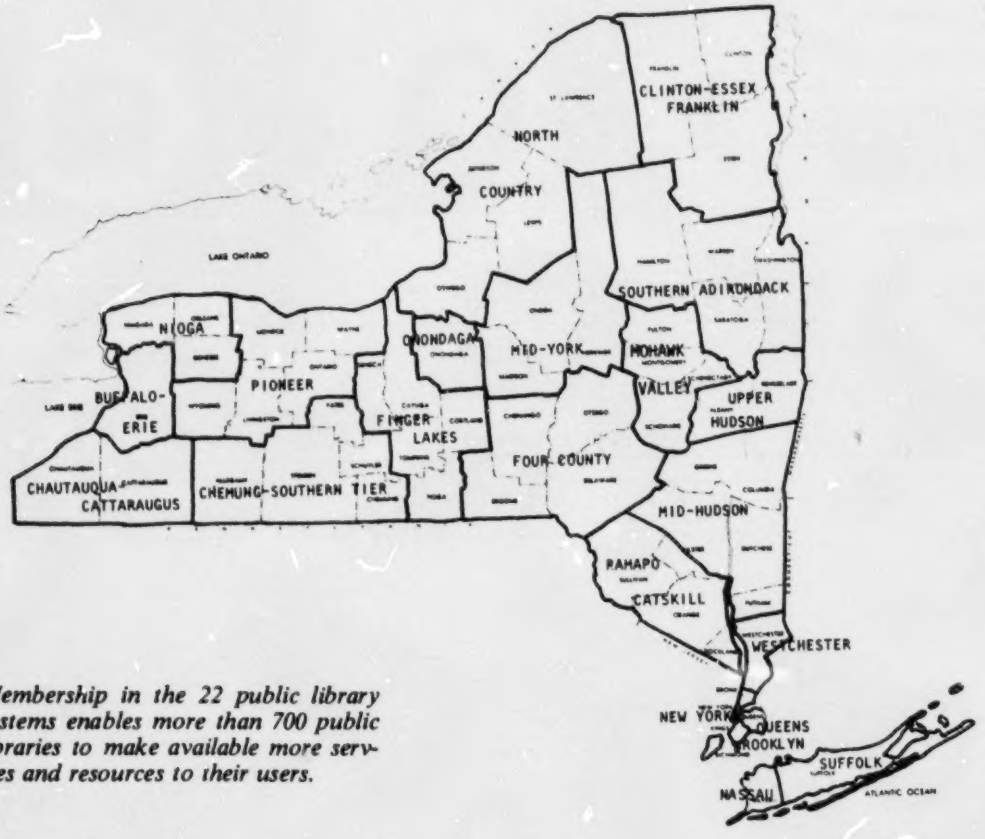
LIBRARIES IN NEW YORK STATE

As a library trustee in New York State, you and the library you represent are supported by what is probably the strongest library organization of any state in the country.

First, your library is chartered by the Board of Regents of the University of the State of New York. The Regents coordinate responsibilities for all types of educational and cultural institutions, including libraries.

Second, a bureau of the State Education Department specifically provides leadership, guidance, and training for the more than 700 public libraries in the State. Nearer to your local problems are the 22 public library systems, which cover the whole State and provide support and guidance to all member libraries. Ninety-nine percent of the public libraries in the State are system members.

Through the 22 public library systems our libraries receive a multiplicity of services. Each system develops its own plan of service subject to State approval, and therefore it follows that no two systems work exactly in the same way. All of them, however, are dedicated to helping libraries that are chartered within the area served by the system, and to providing library service to those areas where there are no local libraries. Each system has a designated central library or co-central libraries from which member libraries receive reference services. Interlibrary loan services are provided by each system using the central library collections as its primary source.



Membership in the 22 public library systems enables more than 700 public libraries to make available more services and resources to their users.

While many systems do make cash and book grants to member libraries, most of the services systems perform for you are not financial. Some of the services provided are: consulting on general library problems; help to your librarians in improving adult and children's programs or services; book backstopping through rotating collections and bulk loans; direct loans of films, records, and art prints; providing selection tools to your librarian through reviews, checklists or annotated book lists; librarian and trustee training through system-wide workshops and newsletters; centralized purchasing and cataloging; and help with public relations problems both through consultation and advice and through providing your library with display art, posters, signs, bookmarks, etc.

Each cooperative public library system works under the guidance of a board of trustees chosen by the trustees of member libraries. Therefore there is considerable local control over expenditures made by the system and the services provided. In consolidated and federated systems, trustees are chosen in a different manner, but control is still largely local.

A somewhat more specialized but extremely valuable help to you are the nine Reference and Research Library Resources Systems—usually referred to as 3 R's systems. Most of these systems cover an area made up of two or more public library systems, all of whom are members of a 3 R's system. In addition, college and university libraries, business and research libraries, special libraries, and hospital and other health agency libraries may be members of 3 R's systems.

The primary goal of these systems is the sharing of resources to meet the reference and information needs of the users of all member libraries. They provide interlibrary loans, delivery services, cooperation in collection development, microfilming and preservation programs, reciprocal or direct access, cooperative use of computer-based systems, and many other services. They bring to the libraries in their areas access to the whole world of books and other library materials. Through interface with the New York State Interlibrary Loan System (NYSILL) and with OCLC, the country's largest bibliographic facility, and through other computerized data bases, they are able to locate and borrow almost any reading material requested by users of member libraries, no matter how small those libraries are.

The 3 R's systems or councils are governed by trustees elected by the membership. These trustees are representatives of member libraries and public library systems in the areas served by the councils. Such trustees may be professionals or lay persons.

Through the State Bureau of Library Development, the public library systems, the New York State Association of Library Boards, and the New York Library Association, regional or state-wide workshops are offered for trustees who wish to learn more about their duties as trustees and about the problems that face libraries everywhere.

SELECTION OF TRUSTEES

Members of library boards are either elected if they are to serve association or school district libraries, or appointed if they are to be trustees of municipal libraries. It must be noted that board members of city school district libraries are appointed by the local board of education. In all cases it is important that new trustees meet the high qualifications that are needed if trustees are to be effective members of a library board.

Of first importance in selecting a candidate for library trusteeship is that the candidate is genuinely interested in libraries and understands their importance as centers of information, of community culture, of recreation, and of life-long education.

Of almost equal importance is the candidate's willingness to devote both time and effort to carrying out the duties of a trustee.

Also needed is a broad understanding of the community, its economic condition, and its social and cultural needs. In larger communities where there are people with many different social, educational, and ethnic backgrounds, trustees need to have an awareness of the inter-relationships of all segments of the community. They should have an understanding of the needs and desires of the various groups. They should not regard the library as a center only for the traditional library user but should recognize that today's libraries offer opportunities to users of all ages and of all backgrounds. Libraries today cannot be satisfied with serving the traditional one-third of the population but must reach out to everyone.

Finally, candidates to serve on library boards should be selected for the background, training, and skills they can bring to a board of trustees. Every board is faced with a wide variety of jobs and decisions that need special skills and expertise if they are to be done well. Needed especially are:

- Skills in management and long-range planning
- Sound understanding of budgets and financing
- Familiarity with personnel and labor matters
- The ability to develop sound public relations programs
- Knowledge of real estate and building problems
- Appreciation of the needs of the various educational and cultural agencies in the community
- Political awareness and the ability to work with local, state, and federal government for the improvement of library resources and services.

What can the current board of trustees do to assure that good candidates are elected or appointed? First, because of their knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the present board, they can seek trustee candidates who are well qualified and will provide the skills needed by the board. They can provide job descriptions for the positions to be filled to the nominating committee or the board making the appointment. In addition, current board members can provide guidance in the selection of candidates by listing the desirable qualifications for a good trustee, and stressing the particular needs of the board at the time. They may even wish to propose the names of some people whom they would consider good candidates.

Frequently, library boards look upon Friends' groups as training grounds for trustees. A member of a Friends' group who has worked conscientiously to promote the welfare of the library has gone a long way toward developing the skills and qualities needed by a good member of a library board. If library boards have done their job well and earned the confidence and respect of the community, then local governments or nominating committees welcome their recommendations.

TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES

Library trustees have many responsibilities but among them is not the day-to-day management of the library. Rather it is their responsibility to see that the library is well managed in a manner consistent with the law and with the policies that they have established. The duties of library trustees are few in number, but they are broad in scope. They require the ability to select a qualified librarian or library director, to develop sound policies, to assure adequate financing and money management, to be good public relations representatives—strong library advocates, and to plan and evaluate against established goals. Demanded of every trustee is the willingness to work cooperatively with other members of the library board. No trustee can speak for the board nor act for the board unless specifically empowered to do so.

All of the duties of library trustees may be reduced to five major categories:

PERSONNEL — It is the responsibility of library trustees to hire the librarian or library director and to insure that the library is managed in a manner consistent with the policies they have established. Other members of the library staff are hired by the library director. It is also the trustees' responsibility to develop personnel policies governing terms of employment, salary schedules, and employee benefits.

POLICIES — It is important that trustees develop a set of clear-cut policies under which the library will be operated. Such policies should be amended and updated from time to time in order that they may be appropriate to changing conditions in library operations and services.

LIBRARY FINANCING — Budgets for the library should be drafted by the library director and staff and reviewed carefully by the trustees. They should not be presented to the voters or to the municipal body providing library funds until approved by the library board.

When a budget has been submitted, it is the responsibility of the trustees to urge that adequate funds are voted or appropriated to fulfill budget demands. This requires the trustees to approve a budget that places a reasonable burden on local finances from whatever source, and then to use all their resources to secure its funding. Once funds have been secured, trustees should carefully monitor the expenditures of those funds.

PUBLIC RELATIONS — The trustees provide liaison between the general public and the library. It is their responsibility to see that the library director and staff fully comprehend the attitude of the community toward the library and understand the community's needs and resources to meet those needs. It is equally their duty to see that the community understands the services provided by the library and the need for public support.

PLANNING AND EVALUATING — A never-ending task for library trustees is general planning for both immediate and long-range library operations accompanied by constant evaluation of library management, services, methods of operation, and adherence to the budget.

LIBRARY BOARD ORGANIZATION

While many library boards may be somewhat informal in their organization and in the conduct of their meetings, it is important for every library board to establish a sound organization. Without organizing in such a way that all the trustees have a clear understanding of their duties, no board can successfully fulfill its obligations.

Library trustees should be sure that they have written by-laws that make clear how the board is to operate. What officers will the board have and specifically what are their duties? What committees should be set up? How should committees be constituted and what should be their responsibilities? How often should meetings be held and how should they be conducted? What are the duties of the trustees in relation to the librarian and library staff?

If a board's by-laws are complete and up-to-date, then it becomes the duty of board members to see that they observe the rules and regulations they have established. Officers and committee chairmen and members should carry out the duties with which they have been charged. Meetings of the board should be held at regular times and should be both frequent enough and of long enough duration so that the work of the board is carried out completely and on time. The successful library board makes sure that meetings follow a carefully worked out agenda. It is also important whenever possible that the agenda is made known to all trustees well in advance of meetings so that they can be prepared to discuss the plans and problems that face the board. Careful and complete minutes should be kept and distributed to members promptly.

Meetings of library boards should be open to the public whether required by law or not. Open meetings may well be the best public relations a library can have. Trustees should welcome questions and suggestions from the public. Plans are developed most successfully when they are founded on the free expression of the thoughts and beliefs of all the trustees and other persons interested in the affairs of the library.

Public libraries hold charters from the Board of Regents; they receive tax funds, deliver a public service, and establish public policy. Accordingly, the obligation of library boards to maintain the highest quality of service is clear.

A library board performs best when it makes use of the talents and skills of all board members when its committees are so constituted that members are genuinely interested in the work of their committees and carry out their assignments promptly. When all members have challenging assignments, attendance at meetings is usually excellent, and the work of the board is carried forward with interest and enthusiasm.

Questions For Discussion

1. How is our board organized? What officers do we have? How are they selected? What are their duties? What is the optimum term of office? Should we limit the number of years of service? Is this organization the best one possible for our library operation?
2. What committees do we have? Are they the committees needed to carry out the work of the board? Do we set up ad hoc committees for particular projects with definite time limits? Are committee reports well developed and done on time?
3. Do we keep our organization up-to-date—shifting responsibilities and making the best use of the abilities of current members? Do all our trustees participate in and contribute to board discussions?
4. Do we provide orientation materials and a program for new trustees?
5. Do we provide a written agenda for board meetings? Do we run our meetings in such a way that our time is well used? Do we meet at the best time for our members and often enough so that we have ample time to transact the necessary business of the board? Is the library director regularly included in all meetings? Do we as a board provide opportunity to meet with staff members?
6. Do we keep up-to-date on State (Commissioner's) regulations that cover our library? Do we include updated materials in our orientation program for new trustees?
7. Is there some need or problem that I as a trustee should volunteer to work on?

LIBRARY POLICIES

In order to build and maintain efficient management of library affairs, library boards of trustees should develop and keep up-to-date the policies under which their libraries are operated. They should be carefully drafted so that their purport and meaning are clearly understood by trustees, librarian or library director, and library staff. Policies should be in readily available form, so that trustees and staff are aware of their purpose in guiding the day-to-day work of the library. It is of special importance that new trustees and staff are made aware of and understand all library policies.

All policies should be developed and approved by the trustees and should be wholeheartedly supported by them. Such policies should be constant guidelines for library staff. Since times and conditions change, policies should frequently be reviewed and updated—or dropped—if necessary.

Without written policies there may be divergent understandings about the rules under which your library is operated. Divergence of opinion may result in lack of cooperation among trustees, between trustees and library staff, or between the library and its users. Mutual understanding is a must if the library is to provide optimum services to its patrons.

Some of the policies a library needs are of a general nature. Certainly there should be developed a clear statement of the aims and purposes of the library. Also needed are policies for book selection, the powers and duties of trustees, the powers and duties of the librarian or library director, the relationship of trustees with the library director, the hours when the library building will be open, the development of budgets, the raising of funds, the development of a public relations program, etc.

Of equal importance is the need for developing and putting into writing policies of a very specific nature concerning such matters as salaries, employee benefits, and other employee matters; charges for lost books; fines for overdue books; use of the meeting room; services for non-resident borrowers; financing of travel and dues for library staff and trustees; rules of conduct for library users; and open meetings.

Questions For Discussion

1. Do we have a carefully worded, up-to-date set of by-laws under which we organize our board and conduct its operations? Are these reviewed by an attorney on a regular basis?
2. Do we have a written policy clearly setting forth the general objectives of our library?
3. Do we have a well-defined personnel policy, understood by the board, and available to all library employees? Is it supplemented by job descriptions, known and understood by the employees, and subject to periodic review? Does our personnel policy cover salaries, employee benefits, hours of work, etc?
4. Is there a book selection policy? Do the members of the board support it wholeheartedly? Does this policy cover gifts to the library as well as purchases?
5. Has a policy been developed covering cooperation with other libraries?—with schools?
6. Do we have a policy covering travel expenses and dues for trustees and staff members?
7. Have we written policies governing such matters as use of meeting rooms and library facilities by outside groups; smoking, noise, and pets in the library; distribution of material and/or use of the bulletin boards by non-library personnel; non-resident borrowers; fines and charges for lost books?

PUBLIC RELATIONS

One of the primary duties of library trustees is building and maintaining good public relations. A community's reaction to its library is of vital importance to every library's well-being, whether it serves a few hundred people or a million people. The definition of public relations given below sounds both formal and forbidding, particularly for small libraries. Yet evaluation of public attitudes and understanding of how library programs are helping to shape those attitudes must exist if your library is to maintain any standing in your community.

Does your library fill a vital role in the community? Does it fill a community need as do your schools, your highway department, your police and fire protection, or is it merely a pleasant adjunct to your village or city life?

As library trustees your first obligation in public relations is to see that your library is relevant to community needs. Once that obligation has been met, then trustees must see to it that the public is well informed as to how its needs are being met. Both of these duties are on-going responsibilities. There must be a constant awareness of the changing needs of the public and of the library's responsiveness to those needs.

Finally, if the library is doing its job well and truly serving your community, the library trustees must then make sure that the local governing authorities are kept aware of the importance of the library and the effective job it is doing. In most cases, the bulk of the library's funds come from these local bodies, whether they be village, town, city or county governments, or the voters of your local school district or library association. Members of library boards must maintain good diplomatic and political relationships with local government. They must know local political leaders, learn their attitudes toward the library, and build understanding of the library's importance and service to their community.

As a library trustee you have the dual role of seeing that the librarian and the library staff understand the needs of the community and conversely of informing the people of the community what the library is doing to meet those needs. You can speak for the library in some ways better than the librarian, who may be thought of as self-serving. But even trustees may be considered as biased in their opinions as to the importance of the library. It is therefore of great importance for you to enlist the support of library patrons and friends of the library. Particularly if you have an organized Friends' group, they can be excellent spokesmen in support of the library. If you work closely with them and keep them well informed, the Friends can be the best public relations representatives you can have.

"Public Relations is the management function which evaluates public attitudes, identifies the policies and procedures of an individual or an organization with the public interest, and executes a program of action to earn public understanding and acceptance."
—Public Relations Society of America

Questions For Discussion

1. Does our board have a regular public relations program with clearly defined goals and objectives?
2. Do we have a public relations committee in our board structure?
3. Do we as trustees make a consistent effort to keep our community and its government aware of library services, programs, and problems?
4. What do we do as a board to build community support for our library budget?
5. Do we try to build cooperation between our library and the local school system and other cultural institutions in the community?
6. Do we have a Friends of the Library organization supporting our library? Do we as a board give them our support and cooperation? Do we maintain regular liaison with the Friends' organization? Do we encourage their support in a public relations program?
7. How can we develop a regular method for ascertaining our community's appraisal of our library and its services?

LIBRARY LAWS

From a legal point of view the actions of a library board are seldom challenged. Libraries and library boards, however, are subject to education law, to the rules of the Board of Regents, and the regulations of the State Commissioner of Education. Trustees should be aware that they are liable for any infractions of such laws and regulations.

All libraries in New York State are chartered by the Board of Regents, and under their charters they are required to provide library service to a specific area—a village, town, city, county, school district, etc. A report on their operations and service must be transmitted to the Department of Education annually in a form prescribed by the Commissioner. Libraries that are members of public library systems can receive help from the system headquarters in compiling material and filling out the necessary forms.

Trustees are responsible for seeing that the libraries they serve are in compliance with all federal and state laws, rules, and regulations. While the powers of the trustees are broad, there are very definite limits on those powers. Usually, unless trustees act unreasonably, their decisions are not challenged.

Library boards do have the power to manage library property, to establish rules and regulations for personnel and to set salary scales for library staff. They can enter into contracts with municipalities or other libraries for delivery of services. They are empowered to establish policies for library operations and to enforce those policies.

There are restrictions, however, that they must observe. There must be no conflict of interest for board members whether they are appointed by local government or elected. Depending on the number of people served by the library, the employment of the librarian or library director, and, in some cases, staff members, is subject to state standards. For example a library that is a member of a public library system and serves a population of 5,000 to 7,499 must employ as director a person who holds a bachelor's degree; and if the population served is above 7,500, then the director and all persons hired in professional librarian positions must hold public librarian's professional or provisional certificates.

Library board members must hold regular meetings; the days and times for those meetings must be fixed and there must be public announcement of the meetings. They must see that their library complies with current copyright laws. They are responsible for living within established budgets, and they must use library funds only for those purposes for which the library is chartered.

Library trustees should familiarize themselves with the State Education Department publication "Excerpts from New York State Education Law, Rules of the Board of Regents, and Regulations of the Commissioner of Education pertaining to Public and Free Association Libraries, Library Systems, Trustees and Librarians." This compilation is updated annually and widely distributed among libraries.

Questions For Discussion

1. Which laws, rules, and regulations in the State Education Law, the Rules of the Board of Regents, or the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education apply specifically to our library?
2. Is our board so structured that we are in compliance with library laws, rules, and regulations?
3. What is our legal relationship to the public library system of which we are a member?
4. As library trustees do we have to file an annual report? If so, are our records kept up-to-date, and do they provide the information we need in compiling such a report? What duties and obligations do we a trustees have in compiling and approving annual reports?
5. Are the policies and by-laws of our board consistent with library laws, rules, and regulations?

BUDGETS AND FINANCE

A sound library budget is prepared only when the library director or librarian and the library trustees fully understand and are agreed on the library's program and objectives. The purpose of the good library budget is to see that adequate funds are programmed to satisfy the needs of the community for library service.

The preparation of the library budget is primarily the responsibility of library management, but at every stage of its development it should be scrutinized critically by members of the library board, particularly by the president and the treasurer. Before it is presented to the municipal government or to the electorate for funding, it should be thoroughly discussed and should gain the approval of the library board.

The actual presentation of the budget to local government or to the voters is usually the joint responsibility of the librarian and chosen representatives of the library board. As board members are charged with the duty of maintaining liaison between the community and the library, they are usually in a better position to explain the library's needs and to justify the budget than the librarian is.

A major obligation of library trustees is to see that adequate funds are appropriated to maintain the fiscal health of the library. Frequently library boards shrink from the hard sell that is often necessary if the library is going to receive the funds it needs. The good library trustee, however, recognizes the major importance of the library as a cultural, recreational, and educational resource in the community and is willing to put forth whatever effort is necessary to see that it is maintained at a high level. Of course, trustees in approving the budget must be constantly aware of the community's ability to support local services. Beyond that restriction on funds, however, they should make every effort to see that the library gets its fair share of public money.

Beyond local funding, which is the major source of library support, there are funds available from state government and a limited amount from the federal government. At present approximately 84% of public library support comes from local government, 14% from state sources, and 2% from the federal government. Such funds are usually passed through to local libraries by the public library systems. All too often library trustees are neglectful in seeing that they qualify for and receive such state aid. Many grants are available to libraries through the Council on the Arts, the Council on Humanities, LSCA, etc. The well-run library has a librarian fully informed on sources of financial aid and has a board that constantly works to see that their library receives all available funds.

The State Legislature considers new proposals for maintaining, and often increasing, library funds every budget year. Trustees should keep abreast of proposals made and laws considered for library moneys. They should make their needs and wants known to members of the legislature from their area. They should see that their library is represented at Library Legislation Day held each Spring in Albany. They should work with allied groups that share a common purpose.

There are often other sources of funding for local libraries. Library book sales and other community fund raising activities need to be sought out and worked for. Gifts, endowments, and bequests are available. They will be obtained, however, only if the library and its trustees make library needs known and set up programs that invite such gifts.

Library trustees should constantly be aware of the level of funding of other libraries of comparable size and resources.

They should no more accept inadequate funding for their library than they would accept inadequate support of other local services such as schools or highway maintenance.

Trustees' responsibilities do not stop when the budget has been approved and adequate funds provided for library operations. While budget management is primarily the responsibility of the library director or librarian, the trustees should keep constantly abreast of the budget and actual expenditures. They should question marked deviations from the planned budget and reach full agreement with the librarian as to the necessity of such changes. Further, trustees should assume the responsibility for investing available library moneys in order to increase library income. It is also the duty of trustees to maintain expense controls, and to set policies on expenditures for travel both by library staff and trustees. In other words, it is the trustees' obligation to see that the budget they have obtained is well managed.

Questions For Discussion

1. Do we determine the community's needs for library service and then develop a budget to meet those needs?
2. How is our library budget determined? Does our board work with the librarian to produce a final draft of the budget?
3. Does our board participate in the presentation of the budget to our local governing body; to our school district voters; to the members of our library association?
4. Have we a written policy for accepting gifts to the library?
5. Are we taking full advantage of all the sources of funding that are available to us through the state's library systems and through grants?
6. Who follows existing and new grants to be certain that our library applies for appropriate grants? How do we learn about available grants?
7. Does our library get its fair share of local money compared to the support given other government services?

TRUSTEES' RELATIONS WITH LIBRARIAN AND STAFF

If libraries are to be run successfully, there must be a clear understanding of the complementary role of the trustees and of the librarian. While the trustees are responsible for adopting the policies under which the library is to be run, for approving the budget, and hiring the librarian or library director, it is the librarian who has full responsibility for administration of the library. "The librarian runs the library; while the trustees see that the library is properly run."

The trustees set the goals and objectives for the library and establish the policies for library management. Within these policies the librarian administers the library and should have a free hand in its operation. The librarian's performance should be reviewed and evaluated by the trustees on a regular basis.

The librarian provides the professional expertise on library matters and keeps the trustees fully informed on new developments. The librarian uses the board meetings to keep the trustees up-to-date on library problems, on new ideas, and on the need for changes and new or revised policies. The library board, working with the librarian, then gives general guidance and direction, leaving to the librarian the management of day-to-day operations.

The library board members interpret the needs of the community to the librarian. They act as liaison between the library, the local government, and the voting public. They support without exception the policies they have established. The library board acts only as a whole. While there may be differences of opinion among the trustees concerning policies and goals, all board members must support wholeheartedly those policies on which board agreement has been reached. Only when a trustee has been authorized by the board to do so, should a trustee act as an individual on a given problem.

A difficult subject facing all library trustees is their relationship with the library staff. Trustees should know the staff, take a friendly interest in the work they are doing, welcome their ideas. There should be no intervention, however, between the staff and library management. It is the librarian who works directly with the staff and provides direction for their activities. It is the librarian who keeps the trustees informed about staff activities, suggestions, and complaints. At times grievances and complaints may come directly to the library board from the staff. In such cases, however, the board follows established policies in considering the problems that have risen, and it is then through the librarian the decisions that have been reached are conveyed to the staff members. For the trustees to react directly with staff members is to undermine the librarian's position. As long as the librarian's performance is good in carrying out library policies set by the board, the librarian has the right to expect the solid support of the trustees.

The trustees and the librarian are a team and must work together to insure successful operation of their library.

Questions For Discussion

1. Do we have clearly defined policies governing trustee and staff relationships?
2. Under what circumstances, if any, should our board consult with staff members directly instead of with the library director? Do we have a regular grievance procedure?
3. Does our library director keep our board of trustees well posted on library problems, particularly as such problems concern staff performance or staff criticisms and complaints?
4. If staff members file a criticism of library operations with the board of trustees, how should we handle it—directly with the staff members?—only through the library director?—or?
5. Should our board members take part in the hiring of staff members other than the director? Should we use our influence as trustees to secure jobs on the staff for residents of the community whom we know?

PLANNING AND EVALUATION

A never-ending task that faces all library boards is the setting of new goals for their libraries, and updating old ones. Concomitant with that task is the job of measuring how well their libraries are doing in meeting those goals.

Trustees should constantly be asking questions of their librarian and of themselves. How good a job are we doing in meeting current library needs—needs for funds, for staffing, for building our book collection, for providing the best service we can for the community? Are we making the best possible use of the money we have available? Are we keeping library users informed of the services that are available to them? Does our library program reach out to gain new users? Are we making use of the many advances in modern library technology?

Too often library boards tend to maintain the status quo, to mark time. When this happens, the librarian and staff sometimes settle for marking time too. Library trustees need to be ever-questioning. And then they need to be demanding answers not only from the librarian but from themselves. They should be questioning their budget and its funding. Is their library being well run from a financial point of view? How well are the librarian and the library staff doing their job? Has your board established standards of performance for the librarian and staff, and has your board measured, at least annually, the success or failure in meeting those standards?

Part of the job of library trustees is dealing with such everyday problems as building maintenance and upkeep and insurance coverage. Is that kind of problem constantly reviewed to see that it is being handled as efficiently as possible?

All too often boards of trustees fail to measure their own performance. Do board members attend meetings regularly? Do they carry out committee assignments promptly and thoroughly? Do they see to it that the library receives the support it needs? Do they set high enough standards for library service when compared to other communities of similar size and resources? The New York State Department of Education publishes annually a report on statistics of public and association libraries in New York State. It is readily available in all system headquarters and central libraries. Trustees should review this report so that they can develop standards of excellence for their library in such matters as dollars of local support per capita, circulation per capita, salary scales, size of book and serial collections, money spent on library materials per capita, etc. Among the more than 700 public and association libraries in the state, trustees can find many other libraries that will provide fair standards of comparison. The good library board, just like the good librarian, should take pride in their library's successes, but they should always be looking for ways to grow and improve. Only by constant planning and measurement can they reach their goals.

Questions For Discussion

1. Have we as a board developed goals and objectives for library programs?—for the performance of the librarian or library director?
2. Do we make annual evaluations of our success or failure in meeting librar goals and objectives?
3. Do we know how to make use of state reports and then do we use them in measuring our budgets, salary scales, size of book collection, circulation, etc. in relation to other libraries of similar size to our library?
4. Have we developed any method of evaluating community attitudes toward our library and its services?
5. Have we studied our library services in relation to their worth to the various segments of our community; e.g., services to children, to young adults, to senior citizens, to handicapped persons?
6. Do we make evaluations of our library, the library director, the staff, our own board in accordance with a regular timetable?
7. Do we make changes to correct problems that show up as a result of evaluation studies?

BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION

Many library boards are currently faced with the problems of providing more space for library services, of remodeling their building to provide access to the handicapped, or of relocating branch libraries. With building costs at an all-time high, any one of these problems poses a serious question for the library board.

A new building or a major renovation of an existing building requires months of planning and difficult decisions as to financing. Yet many libraries are housed in Carnegie-financed buildings 60 to 70 years old—inadequate in space, hard to heat and light, not easily adapted to the variety of services offered by libraries today, and difficult to alter. Any board faced with building problems should study all the possible alternatives and the costs, and should not proceed until a real need has been established. Added to construction costs are such expenses as site acquisition and new furnishings and equipment.

Usually, unless the local librarian has had considerable experience in library planning, it is advisable to hire a consultant. A consultant, who is often a professional librarian, can advise the library board on space and service needs, on space allocation in a new building, on the feasibility of utilizing the present building and adding to it. A good consultant often will not give your board the answers to their problems but will raise the questions they need to answer before any decisions are made. Today, far more than in previous years, questions of access—especially by the handicapped, of parking, of central location are of great importance.

If trustees decide to build, the choice of an architect is most important. Look at libraries that have been built by architects being considered. What do the people working in those libraries think of them? Do the buildings really work, or are they handsome monuments not well suited for library operations? A new and much larger building can be designed so that it can be operated without increasing staff, a real consideration for today's budgets.

With today's shifting populations and the decrease in school enrollments, it may be possible to adapt an existing building, an unused school or business structure, for example, rather than to erect a new building. Particularly if such a building already belongs to local government or the local school district, it can be purchased or turned over for library purposes at a relatively low cost.

In the case of small libraries, boards of trustees should not discount the possibility of moving into a well-located unused store. We realize today that a handsome Georgian building is not necessary for good library service. Space, good arrangement of facilities, adequate parking, and ready access are far more important. A commercial location used by and convenient to large numbers of people can be made into an excellent branch library, or small town library.

Whether you construct a new building or remodel an old one, your library trustees must work closely with the community and win its support for the project. A good architect will help your trustees and librarian with bidding, legal requirements, contracts, insurance, scheduling, and supervision and inspections of building progress.

If your library has a Friends' group, use their interest and enthusiasm for library improvements to build strong public relations support in the community. And at all stages use your own library and interlibrary loan to obtain helpful articles and books on library building and renovation. Profit from the experience that others have had with building problems.

Questions For Discussion

1. Does our present library provide adequate space for the services we now offer?
2. Does our library building have easy access for handicapped persons?
3. Is our present building well located from the point of view of current library users? Is there adequate parking convenient to the library?
4. Are branch libraries so located that they provide readily available library service to all segments of our community? Do they have convenient parking facilities? Are they readily accessible to the handicapped?
5. If we decide to build a new library, what factors must we consider in choosing a location?
6. If we are to build or remodel, how much space do we need? Do we need a consultant? If so, how do we find such a person? How do we choose an architect who will design a library that fills our needs, works well, and is economically efficient?
7. For a small library or branch should we consider a well-located store or unused public building? What factors should we consider in determining the feasibility of such a move?
8. How do we secure funding for new building?

CONTINUING EDUCATION

Library trustees during their term(s) of service on the library board should steadily grow in their knowledge of library affairs. They should not stop with understanding their own library, but should develop their awareness of what other libraries are doing, particularly those in their own state.

Training for new library trustees should begin with a sound and thorough orientation program. Unless they are familiar with the policies that have been approved by the board and with the by-laws under which the board conducts its business, they cannot be expected to contribute significantly to the management of library service, or—to the work of the trustees.

Such an orientation program, however, should be just a beginning. Trustees should keep up-to-date on the progress of national, state, and local legislation as it affects libraries. By subscribing to and reading "The Bookmark," a quarterly publication of the New York State Library, trustees can keep abreast of progress in the world of libraries. Most public library systems run workshops for trustees, usually one-day meetings in your own area. They are worth attending if trustees want to do their job well. State-wide conferences are run each Fall—a special one for new trustees—and the NYSALB/NYLA Conference for all trustees. No matter how experienced, trustees can learn much from these meetings. Also, set aside a part of each board meeting for a discussion of library problems of a broad general nature. All trustees will profit from such discussions.

Attendance at annual meetings of the New York Library Association (NYLA) is helpful to trustees, especially those meetings that are conducted by the New York State Association of Library Boards (NYSALB) concurrent with the NYLA meetings. Some boards, aware of the financial needs of their libraries, are reluctant to approve dues and travel expenses for trustees. These expenses, however, form a very small part of a library's budget, and they are more than justified because the result is a better informed board. New trustees who have attended system and state meetings are usually most enthusiastic about the opportunities for learning that such meetings have provided.

Trustees should encourage the librarian to call to their attention articles or books that will benefit trustees' knowledge of library affairs. Of particular interest to all trustees should be "The Library Trustee," third edition, by Virginia G. Young (New York & London, R. R. Bowker Company, 1978). Finally, be sure that outstanding service by trustees is recognized. Many systems give annual awards, and state-wide there is the Velma K. Moore Award presented by NYSALB for service on the regional and state level.

The work of a trustee is a constant process of growth and learning. It is not enough to attend meetings, approve or vote on current questions, and then forget about library problems until the next meeting. No trustee can hope to keep abreast of all library operations. That is the job of the full-time library director or librarian. Each trustee, however, should become well-versed on one or more of the library's ongoing problems: finances, personnel, public relations, buildings, etc. As an expert in a given area, the trustee should provide information and recommendations in that area for the rest of the board. A trustee needs to build a general knowledge of all library operations, and to become a specialist in the field in which he, or she, can make the greatest contributions.

Only if library boards ally themselves with state and national trustee organ-

ization can they keep fully informed of the needs of libraries today. Both library systems and local library boards should join the New York State Association of Library Boards (NYSALB); and trustees should take out personal memberships in the New York Library Association (NYLA) and the American Library Trustee Association (ALTA). Whenever possible, library boards should have trustee representation at state and national meetings of these organizations.

Questions For Discussion

1. Do we use our meetings for discussion of the larger questions facing all libraries, or do we confine ourselves to settling immediate problems and questions of local interest only?
2. Do we provide background material to new trustees?
3. Do we have easily available in written form the policies that have been established by the board? Are our by-laws up-to-date and do all board members have copies?
4. Do representatives of our board attend system-wide conferences and workshops? Are we represented at state meetings?
5. Do we have a policy about paying dues and travel expenses for the librarian and library staff? Does that policy cover trustees? If not, should it?
6. Does our librarian keep us well informed about the general problems facing libraries? Have we encouraged our librarian to do so?
7. Have we nominated any of our trustees for system or state awards?

APPENDIX

A CHECKLIST FOR TRUSTEES

Prepared by the New York State Association of Library Boards (NYSALB) to point out some of the ways trustees can participate in the ongoing efforts to improve public libraries in New York State.

1. Examine the composition of your board, in terms of which trustees have impact in local community organizations. Urge all trustees to meet with and to explain the needs of the library to these community groups.

2. Determine which board members have ties with local media-weekly and daily press and radio and TV stations. Request trustees visit with editors and broadcasters and ask for editorial support for library legislation.

3. Ask board members representing special constituencies, such as minorities, women, youth, etc., to enlist their special groups in library appeals to elected officials.

4. Arrange for your board president or an articulate board member to testify when the Governor or the Legislature conducts a "town meeting" in your locality.

5. Include funds in your library budget for institutional memberships in the Trustee Association (NYSALB) and in the New York Library Association (NYLA).

6. Include funds in your library budget for trustee travel expenses, especially for the annual state conference.

7. Ask trustees to bring personal or business stationery to a January board meeting and assign time for all to write to their respective Senators and Assemblymen.

8. Arrange a Saturday worksnop early in the year and ask each trustee to invite their Senators, Assemblymen, and local elected officials. Present a well documented program illustrating how library legislation will benefit the entire community.

9. Have trustees escort their Albany representatives through the local library in their districts. Have patrons or "friends group" on hand to talk to legislators.

10. Ask trustees to request their neighbors, professional associations, and other contacts to write to their elected officials urging support for library programs.

11. Encourage all trustees to communicate with their elected officials by mail, telephone and personal visits and carry the message that the library needs support.

12. Use your imagination and ingenuity to think of more ways to effectively introduce the library trustees into the main stream of community activity so that the powerful force of community pressure can be directed toward the improvement of our public libraries.

GLOSSARY OF SELECTED TERMS

AUDIOVISUAL MATERIALS Nonbook library materials, such as recordings, transparencies, tapes, slides, films, and filmstrips, which require the use of special equipment in order to be seen or heard.

BIBLIOGRAPHIC VOLUME A unit of publication distinguished from other units by having its own title page, half title, cover title or portfolio title. In connection with periodicals, the publisher's volume.

BOOK A unit of publication, either bibliographically independent or a volume in a series published under the same title, consisting of leaves, sheets, or signatures sewn or otherwise bound together, covered or uncovered. Bound volumes of periodicals and newspapers are not considered books.

CATALOGED MATERIAL Any library material which has been identified in a catalog which records, describes, and indexes the resources of a library; as distinct from library materials which are merely physically arranged for use and are not indexed and described individually by item.

CIRCULATION The activity of a library in lending its resources to borrowers. For statistical purposes, photocopies provided in lieu of circulation should also be included. Count one for each loan of a book, serial, or nonbook item.

GOVERNMENT DOCUMENT Any publication in book, serial, or nonbook form bearing a government imprint, e.g., the publications of Federal, state, local, and foreign governments and of world organizations, such as United Nations, European Common Market, etc. Government documents held in a separate documents section of the library are counted as Documents. Documents which are fully cataloged and intershelved with books are counted as Book Stock. Periodicals which bear a government imprint but are treated as part of the periodicals collection are counted as Periodicals. Documents held in vertical files with other ephemera are counted as Pamphlets.

MICROCARD An opaque card containing images photographically reduced to a size too small to be read without magnification.

MICROFICHE A microfilm sheet containing multiple images in a grid pattern.

MICROFILM A strip of film containing photographic images usually too small to be read without magnification. Microfilm has been discontinued as a separate category in the annual report.

MICROFORM Any library material which has been photographically reduced in size for storage and protection purposes, and which must be read with the help of enlarging instruments. Microform is now included within the count of the various types of materials such as books or periodicals. A microcopy of a volume of adult nonfiction is counted as a title and volume of Adult Nonfiction under Book Stock, for example.

NEWSPAPER A serial publication issued at stated and frequent intervals (usually daily, weekly, or semiweekly), which reports events and discusses topics of current interest, and is usually a "primary source" of information to its readers.

NONBOOK MATERIALS Those library materials which do not meet the definition of a book or periodical, such as, audiovisual materials; vertical file materials and similar items which are not individually cataloged; and any other material the form of which requires special handling.

PERIODICAL A serial publication which constitutes one issue in a continuous series under the same title, usually published at regular intervals over an indefinite period, individual issues in the series being numbered consecutively or each issue being dated.

REFERENCE QUESTION Any request for information or aid which requires the use of one or more sources to determine the answer or utilizes the professional judgement of the librarian.

SERIAL A publication issued in successive parts, usually at regular intervals, and as a rule, intended to be continued indefinitely. Serials include periodicals, newspapers, annuals (reports, yearbooks, etc.), memoirs, proceedings, and transactions of societies; they may include monographic and publishers' series.

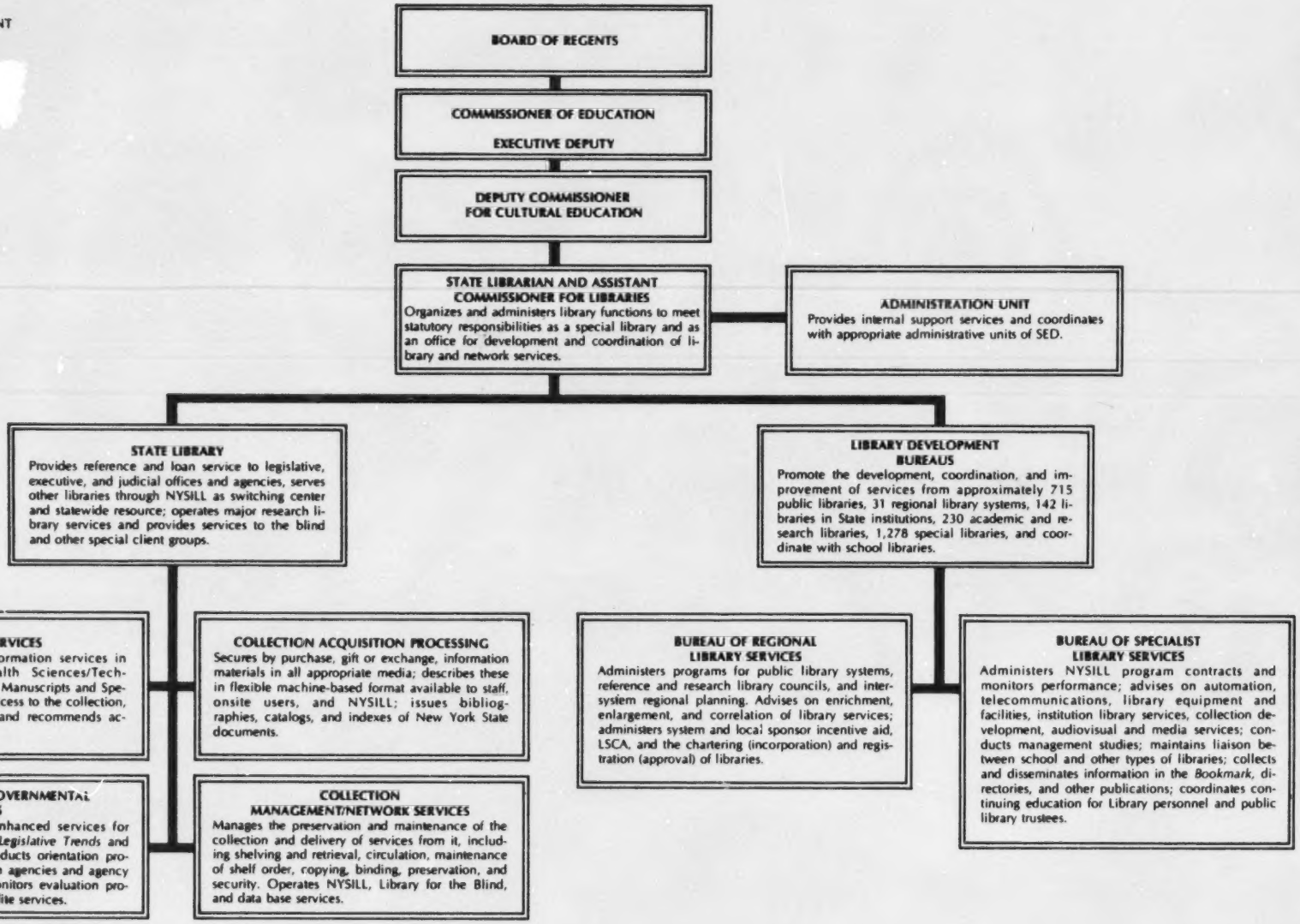
TITLE A term used to designate a printed publication which forms a separate whole, whether issued in one or several volumes. A title is a holding for which a separate shelflist card has been made.

VOLUME For statistical purposes, a volume is a physical unit of any printed, typewritten, handwritten, mimeographed, or processed work contained in one binding or portfolio, hardbound or paperbound, which has been cataloged, classified, and/or made ready for use.

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ALA	American Library Association
ALTA	American Library Trustee Association (ALA)
COM	Computer Output Microfilm
COM Cat	A catalog of library holdings on Computer Output Microfilm
ILL	Interlibrary Loan
ISBN	International Standard Book Number (used to identify a specific author, title and edition of every book published throughout the world)
LC	Library of Congress
LD	Library Development
LSCA	Library Services and Construction Act (Federal)
LSIA	Local Sponsor Incentive Aid
MARC	Machine Readable Catalog
NCLIS	National Commission on Libraries & Information Science
NLW	National Library Week
NPC	National Periodicals Center
NYLA	New York Library Association
NYLIB	New York Library Inter-System Borrowing
NYSALB	New York State Association of Library Boards (NYLA)
NYSILL	New York State Interlibrary Loan
NYSL	New York State Library
OCLC	OCLC, Inc. A bibliographic data service. Formerly Ohio College Library Center.
SED	State Education Department
3 R's	Reference and Research Resources Systems

NEW YORK STATE LIBRARY
STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
January 16, 1979


BOARD OF REGENTS
COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION
EXECUTIVE DEPUTY
DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FOR CULTURAL EDUCATION
STATE LIBRARIAN AND ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER FOR LIBRARIES
Organizes and administers library functions to meet statutory responsibilities as a special library and as an office for development and coordination of library and network services.
ADMINISTRATION UNIT
Provides internal support services and coordinates with appropriate administrative units of SED.
STATE LIBRARY
Provides reference and loan service to legislative, executive, and judicial offices and agencies, serves other libraries through NYSILL as switching center and statewide resource; operates major research library services and provides services to the blind and other special client groups.
LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT BUREAUS
Promote the development, coordination, and improvement of services from approximately 715 public libraries, 31 regional library systems, 142 libraries in State institutions, 230 academic and research libraries, 1,278 special libraries, and coordinate with school libraries.
REFERENCE SERVICES
Provides reference and information services in Humanities; Sciences/Health Sciences/Technology; Law/Social Sciences, Manuscripts and Special Collections. Facilitates access to the collection, evaluates resource strength and recommends acquisitions.
COLLECTION ACQUISITION PROCESSING
Secures by purchase, gift or exchange, information materials in all appropriate media; describes these in flexible machine-based format available to staff, onsite users, and NYSILL; issues bibliographies, catalogs, and indexes of New York State documents.
BUREAU OF REGIONAL LIBRARY SERVICES
Administers programs for public library systems, reference and research library councils, and intersystem regional planning. Advises on enrichment, enlargement, and correlation of library services; administers system and local sponsor incentive aid, LSCA, and the chartering (incorporation) and registration (approval) of libraries.
BUREAU OF SPECIALIST LIBRARY SERVICES
Administers NYSILL program contracts and monitors performance; advises on automation, telecommunications, library equipment and facilities, institution library services, collection development, audiovisual and media services; conducts management studies; maintains liaison between school and other types of libraries; collects and disseminates information in the Bookmark, directories, and other publications; coordinates continuing education for Library personnel and public library trustees.
LEGISLATIVE AND GOVERNMENTAL SERVICES
Develops and maintains enhanced services for State government. Prepares Legislative Trends and other information tools; conducts orientation programs, maintains liaison with agencies and agency libraries, establishes and monitors evaluation procedures, and supervises satellite services.
COLLECTION MANAGEMENT/NETWORK SERVICES
Manages the preservation and maintenance of the collection and delivery of services from it, including shelving and retrieval, circulation, maintenance of shelf order, copying, binding, preservation, and security. Operates NYSILL, Library for the Blind, and data base services.

Library Bill of Rights

The Council of the American Library Association reaffirms its belief in the following basic policies which should govern the services of all libraries.

1. As a responsibility of library service, books and other library materials selected should be chosen for values of interest, information and enlightenment of all the people of the community. In no case should library materials be excluded because of the race or nationality or the social, political, or religious views of the authors.

2. Libraries should provide books and other materials presenting all points of view concerning the problems and issues of our times; no library materials should be proscribed or removed from libraries because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.

3. Censorship should be challenged by libraries in the maintenance of their responsibility to provide public information and enlightenment.

4. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.

5. The rights of an individual to the use of a library should not be denied or abridged because of his age, race, religion, national origins or social or political views.

6. As an institution of education for democratic living, the library should welcome the use of its meeting rooms for socially useful and cultural activities and discussion of current public questions. Such meeting places should be available on equal terms to all groups in the community regardless of the beliefs and affiliations of their members, provided that the meetings be open to the public.

Adopted June 18, 1948.
Amended February 2, 1961, and June 27, 1967, by the ALA Council.